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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy for Field Activities, OSA

SUBJECT : Tape Recorders, Project IDEALIST

REFERENCE : [ ] 2030/66 Minutes of Fifth IDEALIST  
Configuration Evaluation Board

1. Pursuant to the request of the ICE Board, stated in para 2 reference, the Communications and Field Electronics Division is exploring the possibility of purchasing recorders from any one of certain major manufacturers of this equipment, namely, Ampex and CEC. For the purpose of comparison, price and delivery-wise, Polorad has been asked to quote on a quantity of new Rega-Jane units. (Several of the original Rega-Janes are being modified by Astro Science to be used with System 21).

2. This memorandum also wishes to correct certain information presented to the Board during the informal discussion wherein recorder capability was presented.

a. The present "B" unit recorders are 3 track units. Track 1 and 3 are for data, Track 2 is for L/R tones and time. Therefore, the information shown indicating utilization of the present recorder should include time tone and L/R tones.

b. The proposed 14-channel recorder will include the output of [ ] i.e., continuous [ ] This is one of the more vital functions, and by an oversight was not included during the presentation.

3. With respect to para 2b above, if our efforts to replace these "B" units in System 6 had been an accomplished fact, it is quite possible that we would have had a complete history of the events which transpired during the loss of Article 372. It is pointed out that the [ ] may continue to operate and perform its required function even though there has been a complete loss of the communication system equipment. Hence, had we been recording the continuous output of this device, we may possibly have been able to determine the exact train of events as they occurred.

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4. There have been sporadic efforts over a period of several years to replace these "B" units in System 6, but the most intense, continuing effort was started by this Division in about June of 1965. At that time Lockheed was asked to look at several recorders for possible use, and this Division examined the literature and many of the products of most of the recorder manufacturers in this country. However, a commercially available unit could not be found. Consequently, a verbal request was made to ASD/OEL to investigate the possibility of a development program to meet the needs of the 28 channel recorder needed by System 21 and the 14 channel unit required by System 6. This request was made in September 1965, when it was determined that the 7 channel, time sharing approach suggested by Sanders would not be practical for use on System 21.

5. The current recorder status indicates that Astro Science was selected to perform the R&D effort for the new recorder. Delivery of the prototype is promised in about 10 months, with production to follow in 2 months. Some experience with the capability and quality of the product of this company suggests that this time period may be extended by many months before a useful product can be obtained. Ampex has indicated the desire to market a commercial item which we believe will meet the requirements of System 21 and System 6. They have been requested to submit a quotation of price and delivery of the item. The written quotation is expected from Ampex by 11 March. In addition to a fixed price quotation, this company has been requested to submit on a CPIF basis with the view of assuring delivery of the first units in less than 6 months. CEC and Polorad have also been approached. The lack of response from Polorad has eliminated them from consideration. CEC is expected to submit a quotation by about 11 March.

6. The Board will be advised of the progress of this investigation.

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Chief, Communications & Field  
Electronics Division  
OSA-DD/S&T

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